

# ABROAD

## PRETORIA

### *Siege*

The threat of economic sanctions doesn't disturb the South African government as much as foreign opinion thinks it does. South Africa has been making preparations for a siege for a long time. In recent months, there has been considerable stockpiling of essential commodities—\$750 million worth—especially oil, which is the major natural resource the country lacks. For twenty years, the government has been storing oil in disused mine shafts, and it has developed its own oil-from-coal industry. Plans for substituting home-made products for imports were implemented when the rand, South Africa's unit of currency, took a disastrous tumble on world financial markets last year. To counter a looming airline boycott, South Africa is planning to lease out a portion of its fleet of 747 jumbo jets to the airlines of neighboring African countries such as Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mozambique, so that its travelers will continue to have their customary service, albeit with the slight inconvenience of having to change planes. At the same time, British airlines are arranging to obtain landing rights in Botswana, another neighbor of South Africa's. There would be little local interference. Oliver Tambo, head of the African National Congress, the chief opposition organization in South Africa, has said that exceptions to the sanctions would be recognized by neighboring countries because of their trade dependence on South Africa. Assuring airline service is important to South Africa because its low-volume, high-value exports of precious minerals are carried by air freight. These minerals—principally gold, diamonds, and platinum—together account for two-thirds of South Africa's foreign-exchange earnings. Bulk exports like coal, manganese, and chrome might be stopped by a shipping embargo. But the case of Rhodesian chrome, supposedly banned worldwide by a United Nations decree in the early 1970s, reminds us that such sanctions do not always work.

## SEVILLE

### *Function or Museum?*

How far should a historic city go to preserve its old buildings and monuments as a museum of the past for future generations to enjoy and learn from? How far, on the other hand, should it go in the direction of using such buildings as functional structures for the needs of today? These questions were debated at a recent meeting of the European Symposium on Historic Cities, the first to be held in Spain, which underlined the dilemma faced by the cities of southern Europe, too poor to preserve monuments for their own sakes. Francisco Barrionuevo, Seville's deputy mayor, said that it was impossible for Spain to "have two cities, one a museum piece, and ignore the rest as something peripheral." Seville has more than five hundred sites of historic value, most of which are in the poor, northern part of the city where the neighborhoods are deteriorating, while young people who earn higher wages have moved to the suburbs. The symposium concluded that the only way for such sites to be saved is by reforms of national tax laws that would favor restoration of inner cit-

ies, where the historic sites are mostly found, for public use—a policy known as "dynamic conservation."

## MUNICH

### *Alpine Wilderness?*

The familiar fir-clad slopes of the Bavarian Alps may become a barren, treeless wilderness in as little as 15 years unless immediate action is taken to stop acid rain. That is the conclusion of a report by the German Alpine Society, which claims that 78 per cent of the Alpine forest in Germany is dead or dying. This threat has hitherto been associated largely with the Black Forest northwest of here. Not only will the landscape change, the report said; towns and villages built on mountainsides will be subject to far worse avalanches and floods if the trees disappear. Ski resorts will be forced to shut down, and miles of mountain road will become impassable. There is pessimism among ecologists over the ability of politicians to stop vehicle and industrial pollution, believed to be the principal cause of acid rain. Particularly discouraging is the discovery that young trees planted on the slopes disappear rapidly into the mouths of goats and deer, which are deprived of their normal food sources by the death of mature tree stands. "Disaster," one of the scientists associated with the report said, "is just around the corner."

## CAMBRIDGE

### *Animals All, as It Befell*

Cambridge University now has the world's first professor of animal welfare, Dr. Donald Broom. Dr. Broom, a research zoologist, will spend his time teaching and improving the lot of creatures whose behavior he believes is closer to that of humans than is generally supposed. Scientific evidence will be sought by studying diverse matters, including behavioral patterns, growth and reproduction rates, and disease susceptibility. Dr. Broom's academic work will start with domestic animals, but his studies will eventually extend to zoo and laboratory animals, pets, and animals in the wild. Some of his teaching will be unwelcome, especially to the agribusinesses that raise chickens on an assembly-line basis and create artificial and sometimes stressful conditions for other animals for the sake of market value. Dr. Broom says, for instance, that the domestic cow is not indifferent to her surroundings or to the presence and personalities of other cows. On the contrary, cows usually establish well-defined and enduring relations, both friendly and hostile, with other members of the herd.



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